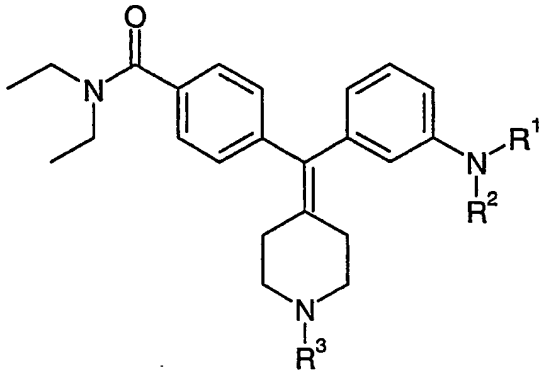
**What is claimed is :**

1. A compound of formula I, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof:



I

wherein

$R^1$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-9}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-9}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $R^8$-C(=O)-, $R^8$-$S(=O)_2$-, $R^8$-S(=O)-, $R^8$-NHC(=O)-, $R^8$-C(=S)- and $R^8$-NH-C(=S)-, wherein $R^8$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-9}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-9}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-9}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-9}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl used in defining $R^1$ and $R^8$ are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R, $-NO_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, $-CF_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, $-NH_2$, -SH, -NHR, $-NR_2$, -SR, $-SO_3H$, $-SO_2R$, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, $-C(=O)NR_2$, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, selected from -H, $C_{1-6}$alkyl and phenyl;

$R^2$ is selected from -H and $C_{1-6}$alkyl optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from halogen, $-CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, and halogen, or $R^1$ and $R^2$ are C1-3alkylene that together form a portion of a ring; and

$R^3$ is selected from -H, $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl, halogenated $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $-NO_2$, $-CF_3$, $C_{1-6}$alkoxy and halogen.

2. A compound according to claim 1, wherein

$R^1$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, -$CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen;

$R^2$ is selected from –H and $C_{1-3}$alkyl; and

$R^3$ is selected from –H and $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-.

3. A compound according to claim 2,

wherein $R^1$ is $R^9$-$CH_2$-, wherein $R^9$ is selected from phenyl, pyridyl, thienyl, furyl, imidazolyl, triazolyl, pyrrolyl, thiazolyl, N-oxido-pyridyl, benzyl, pyridylmethyl, thienylmethyl, furylmethyl, imidazolylmethyl, triazolylmethyl, pyrrolylmethyl, thiazolylmethyl and N-oxido-pyridylmethyl, optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, -$CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy and halogen; and

$R^2$ and $R^3$ are hydrogen.

4. A compound according to claim 3,

wherein $R^9$ is selected from benzyl, phenyl, pyridyl, thienyl, furyl, imidazolyl, pyrrolyl and thiazolyl, optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, -$CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen.

5. A compound according to claim 4, wherein

wherein $R^9$ is selected from benzyl, phenyl, pyridyl, thienyl, furyl, imidazolyl, pyrrolyl and thiazolyl.

6. A compound according to claim 1, wherein

$R^1$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally

substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, -$CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen;

$R^2$ is –H or $C_{1-3}$alkyl; and

$R^3$ is –H, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, -$CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen.

7. A compound according to claim 6, wherein

$R^1$ is selected from 1-propyl, 2-propyl, 1-butyl, 2-butyl, t-butyl, 2-methyl-1-propyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, cycloheptyl, cyclooctyl, and cyclononyl;

$R^2$ is selected from –H, methyl, ethyl, 1-propyl and 2-propyl; and

$R^3$ is selected from –H, methyl, ethyl, allyl, 3,3-dimethyl-allyl, cyclopropylmethyl, 2-methoxy-ethyl, and 3-methoxy-1-propyl.

8. A compound according to claim 1, wherein

$R^1$ is selected from $R^8$-C(=O)-, $R^8$-$S(=O)_2$-, $R^8$-S(=O)-, $R^8$-NHC(=O)-, $R^8$-C(=S)- and $R^8$-NH-C(=S)-, wherein $R^8$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl; wherein said $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, -$CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen;

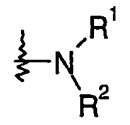
$R^2$ is –H; and

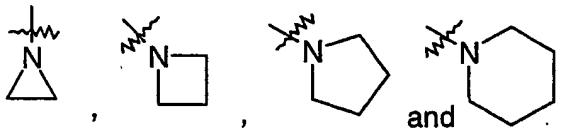
$R^3$ is selected from –H and $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-.

9. A compound according to claim 8, wherein

$R^8$ is selected from phenyl, benzyl, phenethyl and cyclohexyl, wherein said phenyl, benzyl, phenethyl and cyclohexyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from methyl, methoxy and halogen.

10. A compound according to claim 1, wherein


of formula I is selected from


; and

$R^3$ is selected from –H and $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-.

11. A compound selected from:

1) 4-[[3-(benzylamino)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

2) N,N-diethyl-4-[{3-[(3-furylmethyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

3) N,N-diethyl-4-(piperidin-4-ylidene{3-[(thien-3-ylmethyl)amino]phenyl}methyl)benzamide,

4) N,N-diethyl-4-[{3-[(2-phenylethyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

5) 4-[{3-[(4-chlorobenzyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

6) N,N-diethyl-4-[piperidin-4-ylidene(3-{[3-(trifluoromethyl)benzyl]amino}phenyl)methyl]benzamide,

7) 4-[{3-[(2-chlorobenzyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

8) N,N-diethyl-4-[piperidin-4-ylidene(3-{[4-(trifluoromethyl)benzyl]amino}phenyl)methyl]benzamide,

9) N,N-diethyl-4-[{3-[(2-furylmethyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

10) N,N-diethyl-4-(piperidin-4-ylidene{3-[(thien-2-ylmethyl)amino]phenyl}methyl)benzamide,

11) 4-[{3-[(cyclohexylmethyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

12) N,N-diethyl-4-{piperidin-4-ylidene[3-(propylamino)phenyl]methyl}benzamide,

13) 4-[[3-(cyclohexylamino)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

14) 4-[[3-(cyclopentylamino)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

15) 4-[[3-(cycloheptylamino)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

16) 4-[{3-[cyclopentyl(methyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

17) 4-[[3-(benzoylamino)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

18) N,N-diethyl-4-[{3-[(phenylacetyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

19) 4-[{3-[(cyclohexylcarbonyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

20) 4-[{3-[(cyclohexylacetyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

21) 4-[(3-{[(2-chlorophenyl)acetyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

22) 4-[(3-{[(3-chlorophenyl)acetyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

23) N,N-diethyl-4-[(3-{[(5-methylthien-2-yl)acetyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

24) 4-[(3-{[(5-chlorothien-2-yl)acetyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

25) N,N-diethyl-4-[(3-{[(2S)-2-phenylpropanoyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

26) N,N-diethyl-4-[(3-{[(2R)-2-phenylpropanoyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

27) N,N-diethyl-4-[(3-{[(2S)-2-phenylbutanoyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

28) N,N-diethyl-4-[(3-{[(2R)-2-phenylbutanoyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

29) 4-[{3-[benzoyl(methyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

30) 4-[{3-[(anilinocarbonyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

31) 4-[(3-{[(benzylamino)carbonyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

32) N-{3-[{4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]phenyl}piperidine-1-carboxamide,

33) N,N-diethyl-4-[{3-[(phenylsulfonyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

34) 4-[{3-[(benzylsulfonyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

35) 4-[(3-anilinophenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

36) N,N-diethyl-4-[{3-[methyl(phenyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

37) N,N-diethyl-4-[{3-[ethyl(phenyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

38) N,N-diethyl-4-[(3-{[(1S)-1-phenylethyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

39) N,N-diethyl-4-[(3-{[(1R)-1-phenylethyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

40) 4-[(3-{[(1R)-1-cyclohexylethyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

41) 4-[(3-{[(1S)-1-cyclohexylethyl]amino}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

42) N,N-diethyl-4-[{3-[(1-methyl-1-phenylethyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide,

43) 4-[{3-[cyclohexyl(methyl)amino]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide,

44) N,N-diethyl-4-[piperidin-4-ylidene(3-piperidin-1-ylphenyl)methyl]benzamide,

45) N,N-diethyl-4-[piperidin-4-ylidene(3-pyrrolidin-1-ylphenyl)methyl]benzamide,

46) N,N-diethyl-4-[[3-[(2-ethyl-1-oxobutyl)amino]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]-benzamide,

47) N-[3-[[4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]phenyl]-1-methyl-1H-1,2,3-benzotriazole-5-carboxamide,

48) 6-chloro-N-[3-[[4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]phenyl]-3-pyridinecarboxamide,

49) N-[3-[[4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]phenyl]-2-methoxy-benzamide,

50) N-[3-[[4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]phenyl]-2-quinoxalinecarboxamide,

51) N-[3-[[4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]phenyl]-2,5-difluoro-benzamide,

52) 3-chloro-N-[3-[[4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]phenyl]-2-thiophenecarboxamide,

53) N-[3-[[4-[(diethylamino)carbonyl]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]phenyl]-3-methyl-benzamide,

54) N,N-diethyl-4-[[3-[[(methylphenylamino)carbonyl]amino]phenyl]-4-piperidinylidenemethyl]-benzamide, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

12. A compound according to any one of claims 1-11 for use as a medicament.

13. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-11 in the manufacture of a medicament for the therapy of pain, anxiety or functional gastrointestinal disorders.

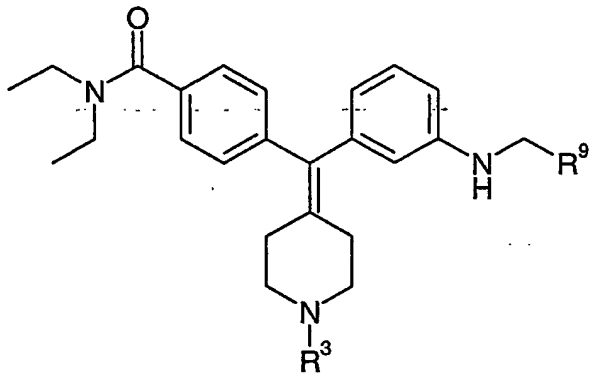
14. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to any one of claims 1-11 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

15. A method for the therapy of pain in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-11.

16. A method for the therapy of functional gastrointestinal disorders in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-11.

17. A method for the therapy of anxiety in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-11.

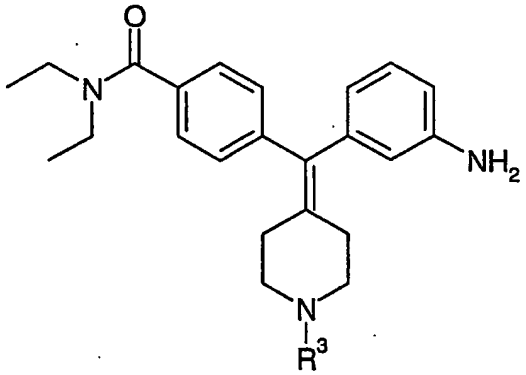
18. A process for preparing a compound of formula III,



III

comprising:

reacting a compound of formula II,



II

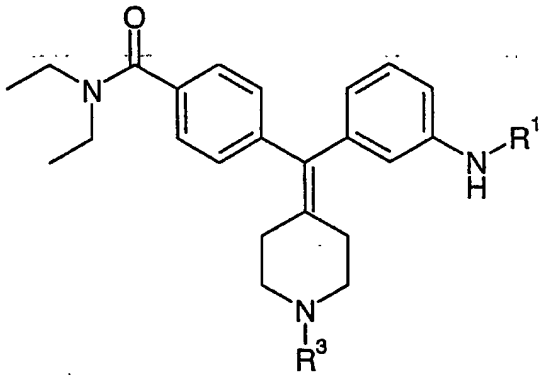
with $R^9$-CHO in the presence of a reducing agent to form the compound of formula III,

wherein

$R^9$ is selected from phenyl, pyridyl, thienyl, furyl, imidazolyl, triazolyl, pyrrolyl, thiazolyl, N-oxido-pyridyl, benzyl, pyridylmethyl, thienylmethyl, furylmethyl, imidazolylmethyl, triazolylmethyl, pyrrolylmethyl, thiazolylmethyl and N-oxido-pyridylmethyl, optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, $-CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy and halogen; and

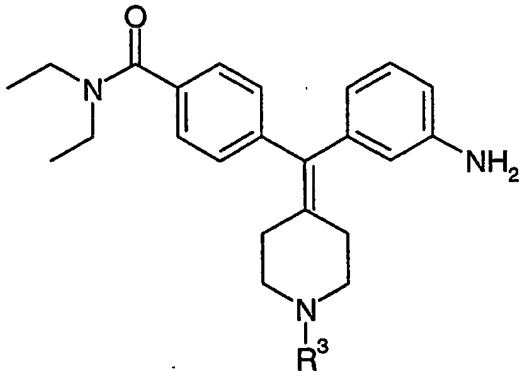
$R^3$ is selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl, halogenated $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $-NO_2$, $-CF_3$, $C_{1-6}$alkoxy and halogen.

19. A process for preparing a compound of formula IV,



IV

comprising: reacting a compound of formula II,



II

with $R^1$-X to form the compound of formula IV,

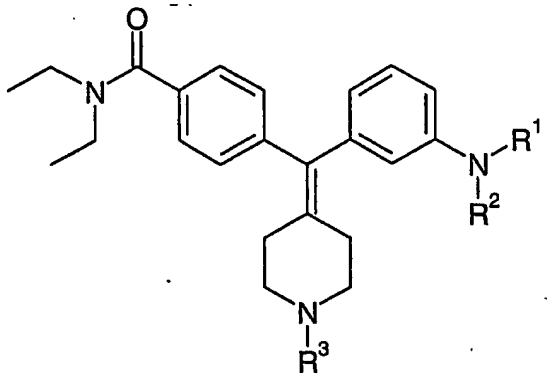
wherein

X is halogen;

$R^1$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, $-CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen; and

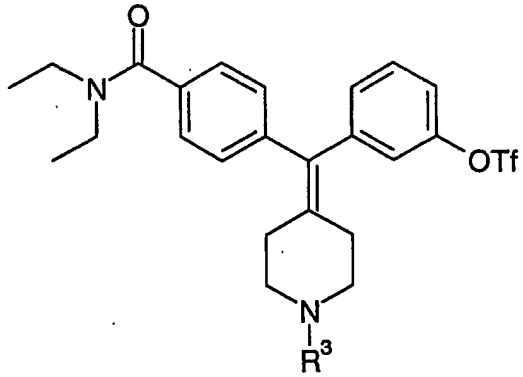
$R^3$ is selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl, halogenated $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $-NO_2$, $-CF_3$, $C_{1-6}$alkoxy and halogen.

20. A process for preparing a compound of formula I,



I

comprising: reacting a compound of formula V,



V

with $R^1R^2NH$ to form the compound of formula I,

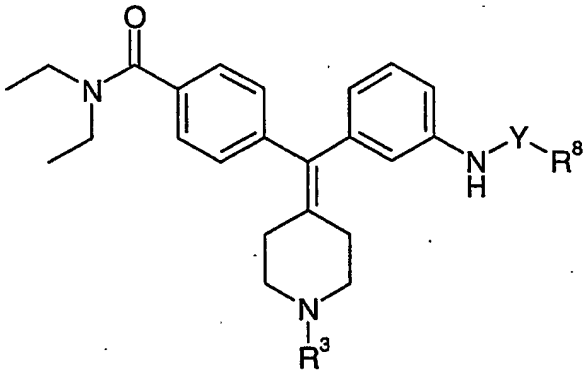
wherein

$R^1$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, $-CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen;

$R^2$ is selected from -H and $C_{1-6}$alkyl optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from halogen, $-CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, and halogen, or $R^1$ and $R^2$ are C1-3alkylene that together form a portion of a ring; and

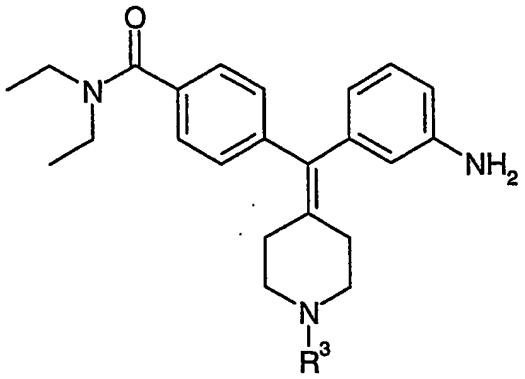
$R^3$ is selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl, halogenated $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $-NO_2$, $-CF_3$, $C_{1-6}$alkoxy and halogen.

21. A process for preparing a compound of formula VI,



VI

comprising: reacting a compound of formula VII,



VII

with $R^8$-Y-X or $R^8$-Y-O-Y-$R^8$ to form the compound of formula VI:

wherein

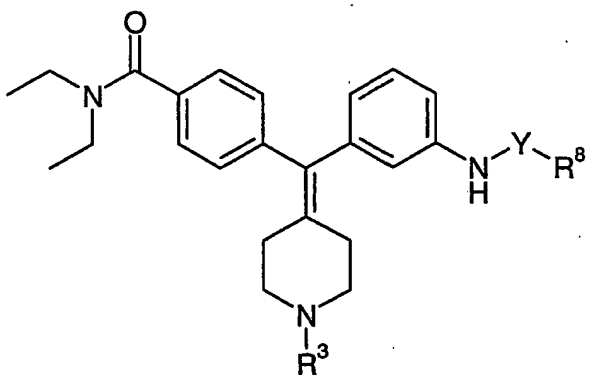
X is halogen;

Y is selected from –C(=O)- and –$S(=O)_2$-;

$R^8$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl; wherein said $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, -$CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen; and

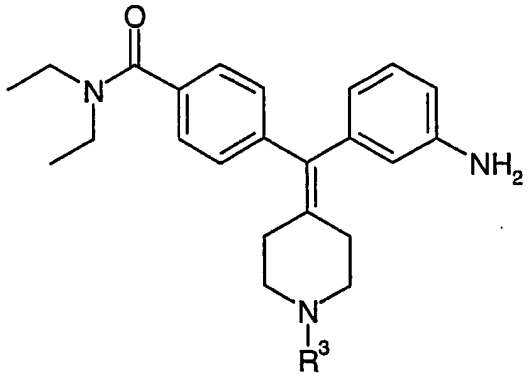
$R^3$ is selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl, halogenated $C_{1-6}$alkyl, -$NO_2$, -$CF_3$, $C_{1-6}$alkoxy and halogen.

22. A process for preparing a compound of formula VIII,



VIII

comprising: reacting a compound of formula VII,



VII

with $R^8$-Z to form the compound of formula VIII:

wherein

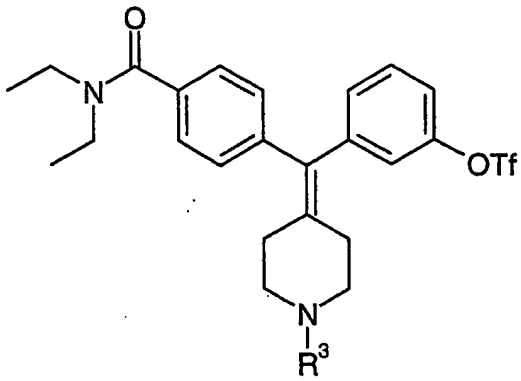
Z is selected from –NCO and -NCS;

Y is selected from –C(=O)NH- and –C(=S)NH-;

$R^8$ is selected from $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl; wherein said $C_{3-6}$alkyl, $C_{6-10}$aryl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl, $C_{6-10}$aryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{2-6}$heteroaryl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-10}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with $C_{1-4}$alkyl, halogen, -$CF_3$, -OH, $C_{1-3}$alkoxy, phenoxy, and halogen; and

$R^3$ is selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl, halogenated $C_{1-6}$alkyl, -$NO_2$, -$CF_3$, $C_{1-6}$alkoxy and halogen.

23. A compound of formula V,



V

wherein

$R^3$ is selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl, wherein said $C_{1-6}$alkyl-O-C(=O)-, $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl, and $C_{3-6}$cycloalkyl-$C_{1-4}$alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from $C_{1-6}$alkyl, halogenated $C_{1-6}$alkyl, $-NO_2$, $-CF_3$, $C_{1-6}$alkoxy and halogen.